

the area, in the days when it was still undeveloped.

As a young man hard at work on a law degree in 1939, Mess signed on with a U.S. government covert operations unit and was sent to Europe, where he traveled behind German lines.

He would receive an honorary green beret more than half a century later to honor his military intelligence service.

Mess returned to the United States in 1940 and returned to school to complete his degree. He married and started a family. Two years later, he enlisted in the Quartermaster Corps and was on his way to Asia when he caught his first glimpse of the future. Stationed in San Diego for a month, he got a chance to see the area's regional system of parks, golf courses and swimming pools, available to the public at no cost.

He came home in 1946 to his wife and a 4-year-old daughter he had never met. He brought with him four Bronze Star Medals, malaria, blackwater fever and the knowledge that he was lucky to be alive.

It was time, he decided, to help his native Washington benefit from the kinds of land preservation and recreational opportunities he had seen in California.

What the area needed, he decided, was a regional park system. Others agreed, and together they embarked on a decades-long journey to make it happen.

"When you start to do something, and you don't have any money and you have to get it from the public, you have to be very patient," Mess said. "We were very patient. That was part of the game."

It was also part of their success.

It took about 10 years to persuade legislators in Richmond to grant their approval. In 1959, Mess was Falls Church's first appointee to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Board.

Since then, the park authority has spent \$120 million on land, including parcels along the Occoquan Reservoir and Potomac River and on the environmentally fragile Mason Neck.

"Our whole idea was to protect the watershed and give people access to the water," Mess said. "Back in the early days, much of that land was land that developers weren't going to use."

In 1975, Mess became the authority's second chairman. In 1999, the agency honored his 40 years of service by naming its headquarters in Fairfax Station for him.

"This whole thing I'm being given credit for I didn't do," Mess said. "The people around me did." The authority "gets credit for planning and starting it, but we couldn't have done it without everyone."

#### A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING BEV RILEY

**HON. ROBERT W. NEY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 8, 2005*

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Bev Riley has served continuously as the office manager for the Chillicothe Mayor's Office for twenty years; and

Whereas, Bev Riley provided her services as office manager through the administration of three different Chillicothe mayors; and

Whereas, Bev Riley's service to the residents of Chillicothe is greatly appreciated by

all who have worked with her. She should be commended for the help that she provided to the people of Chillicothe and the surrounding area.

Therefore, I join with the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in celebrating Bev Riley's twenty years of service to the Village of Chillicothe.

#### HONORING THE LITERARY AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIOLA HERMS DRATH

**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 8, 2005*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for a very special occasion—to celebrate the birthday of a distinguished American who is an author, playwright, journalist and diplomatic advisor—Viola Herms Drath.

Viola left her native Germany when she married U.S. Army Colonel Francis S. Drath, another great American, then Deputy U.S. Military Governor of Bavaria, after World War II. Prior to her marriage, Viola had established herself as a young playwright in Munich. Her first play, *Farewell Isabell*, a comedy, written at the age of 18 in the aftermath of the war, which was praised by critics, signaled the beginning of a long, creative career.

As her career evolved in the United States, she became a longtime Washington correspondent for *Handelsblatt*, Germany's equivalent of the *Wall Street Journal*, and a member of the Executive Committee of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. Viola's insightful writings have helped Americans and Germans better understand post-war foreign policy. One of her articles for the National Committee entitled "The Reemergence of the German Question" published in 1988 proposed negotiations on German unification between the two German states and the four Allied Powers. As a foreign policy advisor of the 1988 Bush Presidential campaign, she helped lay the groundwork which led to the "2+4" process towards German unification in 1990.

Her biography of former German Chancellor Willy Brandt, *Willy Brandt: Prisoner of His Past*, first published in 1975, is being reissued this June in conjunction with the Broadway premiere of Michael Frayn's play "Democracy". Dr. Henry A. Kissinger recently praised this biography by calling it "a must-read for those interested in fully appreciating an important statesman both within his own times and beyond."

We are thankful to have the talents and energies of this extremely accomplished and talented individual. We wish her and her family many more birthday celebrations and all the best on this great occasion.

#### TRIBUTE TO DON DEMERS

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 8, 2005*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with heavy heart that I rise to pay tribute to Don DeMers. Don passed away Tuesday, February 1st after a long and courageous battle against cancer. I wish to recognize his accomplishments for the residents of Fresno County, as well as commend him on a life well lived.

In 1986, Don and I worked together to pass "Measure C" before the Fresno County voters. This groundbreaking legislation established Fresno County as one of the Nation's first "self-help" communities. The money collected through this measure allowed Fresno residents to build their own roads when our State Government could not. Through his expertise and management, Don invested the measure's proceeds to finance many severely needed rural and urban roads in Fresno County. As a result, residents and visitors to Fresno County today enjoy Route 41, SR 168 and SR 180, among others. These roads are vital to Fresno County's continued growth and expansion. Don's 18 years of service as Executive Director of Fresno County Transportation Authority realized the success we knew Measure C would bring to Fresno, and I do not believe that the height of this success could have been realized without him.

Don possessed a great spirit, sense of humor, and a keen intellect. Knowing him, it was hard not to like him. He made me laugh, and the breadth of his interests was compelling.

Of course, Don cannot claim sole responsibility for his accomplishments. The love and support of his beautiful and devoted wife, Deborah, enhanced and permitted his successes. Don is also survived by his two sons, three daughters, and eight (soon to be nine) grandchildren. Don was deeply devoted to his family, and this devotion was returned in kind.

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to have known Don DeMers, and I will remember him. Don, you will be greatly missed.

#### RECOGNIZING SIR RAYMOND A. LONG

**HON. BILL SHUSTER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 8, 2005*

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sir Raymond A. Long, in honor of his dedication a commitment to the well being of his community and the Jaffa Shrine. For the past 43 years, as Colonel of Units for the Shrine, Sir Long's guidance has been the source of security and stability and his impact has been widely respected.

Since the beginning, Sir Long has consistently exhibited the qualities to which he is committed, sharing with his community a moral code based upon honesty, strength of character, and the highest standard of ethics. His values go hand-in-hand with the Shrine's